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Sen. McManus heralds passage of citizen-initiated Legal Birth Definition Act

LANSING – State Sen. Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, called the Senate’s approval today of the citizen-initiated Legal Birth Definition Act a victory for Michigan’s most vulnerable citizens.

“We have made history today,” said McManus, the sponsor of the original proposal that was vetoed in October. “I commend the thousands of everyday citizens from across this state who have raised their voices in support of our youngest, most vulnerable citizens who do not yet have a voice of their own. By approving the citizen-initiated Legal Birth Definition Act today, we have shown that you cannot hold back the will of the people.”

The People’s Override was launched in January to put the measure back before the Legislature in a way that would prevent the governor from vetoing it. In just 90 days, more than 460,000 Michigan citizens signed petitions supporting the Legal Birth Definition Act.

“The overwhelming support it has received – both from citizens and legislators – was not enough to convince the governor to sign this important legislation,” McManus said. “But the people have spoken and her attempt to block protections for Michigan’s most innocent citizens has failed.”

The Legal Birth Definition Act defines the moment at which a person is considered “born” and therefore eligible for the full protection of the law. Through this definition, partial birth abortions would be banned except in rare cases where the physical health or life of the mother is threatened by delivery.

Unfortunately, Senate Democrats were able to stop the act from taking effect immediately. That means it will be enacted 90 days after sine die - the last legislative session day of the year.

In *Roe v. Wade* and the legal decisions that followed it, the U.S. Supreme Court established that a fully born child is afforded full constitutional rights, and that a child within his or her mother is not a legally-protected person. However, no court has ever sought to define the term “unborn” or bar states from defining “born.” The initiative clarifies this ambiguity, establishing a clear line between when pregnancy ends and birth begins.

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Editor’s note: Audio comments from Sen. McManus are available on the Senate Majority Multi-media link at <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/index.htm>.

The full text of her speech also is available online at <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/breakingnews/index.htm>.